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CATALOGUE

OF

LITHOGRAPHS

BY

J. McN. WHISTLER

EXHIBITED AT
THE GROLIER CLUB
APRIL 4TH TO APRIL 27TH
1907

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WHISTLER'S LITHOGRAPHS

THE art of James McNeill Whistler is best known through his oil paintings and etchings, but he made use of other mediums; namely, water color, pastel and lithography. He was always very much interested in technical processes and when he took up the lithographer's stone in the late seventies he tested its possibilities with enthusiasm. It was suited to his taste and to his resources as an artist. When he made a drawing he thought more of terse suggestion than of the elaborate definition of detail, and he found that in lithography he could make a kind of drawing expressing perfectly his ideas of substance and

atmosphere. His early lithographs, like some of the most famous of his early etchings, were river scenes made along the Thames. As he progressed in the study of the medium he took a wider range and drew on the stone, figures, portraits, scenes in cities, and other subjects, all of which will be found represented in this exhibition.

Whistler enjoyed making experiments and when he added lithography to his accomplishments he did not take over an old method and use it conventionally, but endeavoured to find out all that could be made of this branch of art, and to be as individual in his employment of it as he was in painting or in etching. Sometimes he used the familiar lithographer's stone of commerce. On other occasions he used the transfer paper which is equally well-known to artists. Whichever he used he made subservient to

his own conception of lithography and a source of new effects. When he began to make lithographs they left little impression upon the public, though some of them were issued with a short-lived magazine, "Piccadilly," which circulated, if only to a limited extent, among people supposed to care for such things. Whether he was discouraged or not, Whistler confined his attention for several years to the processes by which he chiefly won his fame; but after a while he returned to the stone and henceforth, down to within five or six years of his death, he used it, off and on, producing a considerable number of subjects.

Collectors began to appreciate his work and lithographs which, when published at all, had fetched a small price or were practically neglected, were gathered into portfolios by dis-

cerning amateurs. To-day Whistler's lithographs are growing rare. For this reason, as well as for the intrinsic interest of the works it contains, this exhibition is offered for public consideration.

CATALOGUE

CATALOGUE

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